

To: Appropriations Committee
From: Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Date: March 19, 2012

Re: SB 284 An Act Creating a Childhood Immunization Task Force

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics supports SB 284
AN ACT CREATING A CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATION TASK FORCE

Over the past 6 months, our representatives have served on the Childhood Immunization Task Force, chaired by Senator Harp and Representative Tercyak, which was in effect from late 2011 and submitted a report in February to the Legislature. The charge of that task force was the same as this. We were pleased to be a part of that task force, and are just as pleased to be named as members of this one. However, we believe the charge should be changed.

Last year's task force recommendations included continuing a universal vaccine program, maintaining recommended vaccines for all children in the state and allowing choice of brand of vaccine.

The task that remains to be done is to find an equitable way for insurers and health care companies to be assessed for purchasing of vaccines in order to lower health care costs, and assure that vaccines are available to providers. The current system of assessment is inequitable, however the benefits of having universal access should not be compromised.

The CTAAP believes that there are several ways to make this more equitable. Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Washington have worked to solve the payment issue, with state health agencies, providers, and insurers working together to have a universal immunization program covering all recommended vaccines for all children, regardless of their insurance status. These systems allow that the insurers only pay for the health care of children in their plans, and enable them to take advantage of the Federal negotiated price for vaccine.

We would recommend that the task force continue with the sole task of devising a fair and sustainable method of financing a universal vaccine program that provides access to all of the recommended vaccines and that it be financed by both the Federal government (as it is currently) and by the companies that provide well child coverage to their insured children.

Respectfully submitted,

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